

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 EB-07

COME-00 TRSE-00 FEA-01 H-01 L-02 /065 W

----- 050734

R 060712Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3267

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL KRAKOW

AMCONSUL POZNAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE WARSAW 0721

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PL, US, SU

SUBJECT: POLISH MEDIA ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS

REF: (A) WARSAW 282; (B) WARSAW 684 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: THE POLISH MEDIA HAVE CONCENTTRATED MUCH ATTENTION ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS IN THE TWO EEKS FOLLOWING SOVIET CANCELLATION OF THE 1972 US-SOVIET TRADE AGREEMENT. COVERAGE HAS ACCENTUATED BOTH THE "CORRECTNESS" OF THE SOVIET DECISION AND THE DESIRE OF THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION TO CONTINUE IMPROVING US-SOVIET RELATIONS DESPITE THIS SETBACK WHICH IS BEING BLAMED ON A MINORITY OF CONGRESSMEN PROMOTING NARROW INTERESTS. THE PERIOD ALSO FEATURED A 30-MINUTE TELEVISION PANEL DISCUSSION OF "KISSINGER'S VIEWS," EXTRAORDINARY FOR ITS FREE-WHEELING GIVE-AND TAKE AND FOR IMPLICITLY ENDOWING THE SECRETARY WITH A STATURE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS PERHAPS GREATER AND NORE FAVORABLE THAN THAT ACCORDEN ANY OTHER POST-WAR AMERICAN STATESMAN. END. SUMMARYM

2. IN ADDITION TO PLAYING UP ADMINISTRATION EX-PRESSIONS OF A DESIRE TO CONTINUE DETENTE AND EVENTUALLY TO
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SEEK NEW MFN LEGISLATION, THE CENTRAL PRESS HAS PROMINENTLY

REPORTED AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY SUPPORT AS WELL AS AMERICAN PRESS CRITICISM OF THE JACKSON APPROACH. SOVIET STATEMENTS STRESSING THE "UNALTERABILITY" OF SOVIET POLICY WERE ALSO EMPHASIZED, AND THE SOVIET DECISION WAS VIEWED AS A JUSTIFIED COUNTER TO AN UNWARRANTED ATTEMPT AT INTERFERENCE BY A CONGRESSIONAL MINORITY IN INTERNAL SOVIET AFFAIRS. HOWEVER, THE EMIGRATION ISSUE HAS ONLY BEEN OBLIQUELY REFERED TO:

3. A SOUR NOTE WAS INTRODUCED BY A PRESS REPORT OF A NATO STUDY GROUP'S SUGGESTION THAT THE SOVIET ACTION COULD THREATEN THE WORK OF CSCE, BUT THIS WAS EFFECTIVELY COUNTERED BY SUBSEQUENT REPROTING OF SOVIET STATEMENTS UPON RESUMPTION OF CSCE THAT THE TRADE ISSUE WOULD NOT AFFECT THE CONFERENCE. AS FOR OVERALL IMPACT ON DETENTE, SEVERAL EDITORIALS POINTED TO THE IMPROVEMENT IN US-SOVIET RELATIONS THAT HAS ALREADY OCCURED EVEN WITHOUT MFN.

4. ENSUING COMMENTARY TENDED TO SHIFT FROM CRITICISM OF SENATOR JACKSON AND HIS FOLLOWERS TO A GENERAL CRITICISM OF CONGRESS FOR ENCROACHING ON THE DAY-TO-DAY WORKING OF US FOREIGN POLICY. THIS TREND MAY HAVE BEEN STIMULATED PARTLY BY THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS TO THAT EFFECT IN HIS LOS ANGELES SPEECH WHICH WAS REPORTED PROMINENTLY HERE, BUT TRYBUNA LUDU'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT ALSO REPORTED THE GENERAL VIEW THERE THAT CONGRESS HAD "GONE TO FAR" AND, IN PARTICULAR, THAT THE WHOLE AFFAIR WOULD ULTIMATELY HARM SENATOR JACKSON HIMSELF.

5. THE LATTER POINT WAS REINFORCED BY TRYBUNA LUDU COLUMNIST ZYGMUNT BRONIAREK WHO ON JANUARY 31 CITED THE LOSERS IN THE EVENT: US BUSINESS INTERESTS, WHICH MAY NOW LOSE OUT IN SOVIET TRADE RELATIONS TO THE JAPANESE AND OTHERS; THE AMERICAN WORKING CLASS; THE CONGRESS ITSELF WHICH, ACTING ON BEHALF OF A "ZIONIST MINORITY," HAS DAMAGED THE INTERESTS OF THE WHOLE COUNTRY; AND FINALLY, SENATOR JACKSON AND HIS PRESIDENTIAL AMBITIONS. BRONIAREK OBSERVED THAT SENATOR JACKSON IS NOW BEING WIDELY RIDICULED FOR HIS "SILLY" NOTIONS ABOUT US-SOVIET RELATIONS.

6 THE ONLY NEGATIVE COMMENT ADDRESSED TO THE ADMINISTRATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DERIVES APPARENTLY FROM MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESIDENT'S VETO AUTHORITY. JANUSZ STEFANOWICZ, IN A SLOWO POWSZECHNE EDITORIAL ASKING WHY THE PRESIDENT DID NOT VETO THE BILL, SUGGESTED THAT HIS FAILURE TO DO SO SHOWED EXECUTIVE WEAKNESS AGAINST CONGRESS. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER, STEFANOWICZ INDICATED THAT HE WAS SIMPLY UNAWARE OF THE PRESIDENT'S LACK OF VETO AUTHORITY. ADMINISTRATION STATEMENTS EXPLAINING THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION IN THAT

REGARD HAVE NOT BEEN REPORTED HERE.

7. AMID THIS DISCUSSION, POLITYKA EDITOR MIECZYSLAW RAKOWSKI ON JANUARY 28 CHAIRED A TELEVISION PANEL DISCUSSION OF "KISSINGER'S VIEWS" ON EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS. MOST OF THE HALF-HOUR WAS SPENT, HOWEVER, IN LIVELY DEBATE OF THE MOTIVATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE SECRETARY'S BUSINESS WEEK STATEMENT REGARDING POSSIBLE USE OF FORCE IN AN OIL CRISIS. THE PANEL VIEWED HIS REMARKS AS INTENDED EXCLUSIVELY FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT, ON AMERICA'S EUROPEAN ALLIES AS MUCH AS ON THE OIL PRODUCERS. ONE PARTICIPANT INTERPRETED THE STATEMENT AS ESSENTIALLY "INTERNATIONALLY-MINDED" IN THAT ONLY 8 PERCENT OF US OIL COMES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST. HOWEVER, ANOTHER POINTED OUT THAT THE ENERGY CRISIS HAS ENHANCED THE US POSITION VIS-A-VIS ITS ALLIES AND ALLEGED THAT THE SECRETARY HOPES THEREBY TO EXACT GREATER "OBEDIENCE" FROM THEM, AN APPROACH ON HIS PART THAT ALL DECRIED AS "UNREALISTIC." (A FEW DAYS LATER AT AN EMBASSY SCREENING OF THE SECRETARY'S INTERVIEW WITH BILL MOYERS (WARSAW 684), ONE OF THE PANEL MEMBERS ACKNOWLEDGED TO US THAT THE PANEL HAD PROBABLY ATTRIBUTED MORE IMPORTANCE TO THE SECRETARY'S "THREAT" THAN IT WARRANTED.) THE PARTICIPANTS ALSO VIEWED THE THREAT AS A REFLECTION OF THE GROWING IMPINGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ON US FOREIGN POLICY, AND ONE PANEL MEMBER WHO HAD RECENTLY VISITED THE US STRESSED THE PUBLIC DISILLUSIONMENT WITH FOREIGN POLICY THAT HE ENCOUNTERED THERE. IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT THE DAYS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN MILITARY VENTURES SUCH AS VIET-NAM AND LEBANON ARE ENDED, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF SOVIET POWER. THE FEW MINUTES REMAINING TO DISCUSS US-SOVIET RELATIONS GAVE ONLY TIME TO REAFFIRM THE MEDIA THEME OF THE WEEK; THAT DETENTE PREVAILS DESPITE SPECIFIC SETBACKS SUCH AS THE MFN AF-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FAIR AND THAT BLAME FOR THE LATTER GOES TO CONGRESS AND NOT THE ADMINISTRATION.

8. COMMENT: THE MEDIA DISCUSSION HAS EMPHASIZED THE MFN INCIDENT AS A "PASSING" PROBLEM WHICH MAY YET BE RESOLVED AND WHICH SHOULD NOT IMPEDE OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN US-SOVIET RELATIONS. RECNET RESUMPTION OF SALT AND CSCE HAVE OCCASIONED FURTHER EDITORIAL EMPHASIS OF THIS POINT. THE TELEVISION PANEL DISCUSSION, WHICH GOT A HIGHLY FAVORABLE PRESS REVIEW, WAS UNUSUAL FOR ITS LIVELY EXCHANGES AND FOR THE HIGH LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION EXHIBITED. THE PARTICIPANTS SEEMED GENUINELY ANXIOUS TO EXPRESS PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS, AND THE MODERATOR HAD SOME DIFFICULTY ENSURING THAT THE REQUISITE POLICY POINTS WERE MADE. THE POLISH AUDIENCE MUST HAVE GAINED A DEEPER APPRECIATION OF THE SECRETARY'S PERSONAL STATURE AND POLICH

IMPACT: THE SOVIETS WILL BE CALLING FOR EQUAL TIME FOR GROMYKO.

DAVIES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975WARSAW00721
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750043-0707
From: WARSAW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750264/aaaacgaa.tel
Line Count: 171
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 WARSAW 282, 75 WARSAW 684
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUN 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLISH MEDIA ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, PL, US, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006